NUMB. CXLIX.

The GUARDIAN.

——Uratur Vestis amore tuæ. Ovid.

Tuesday, September 1. 1713.

I Have, in a former *Precaution*, endeavoured to shew the Mechanism of an *Epick Poem*, and given the Reader Prescriptions whereby he may, without the scarce Ingredient of a *Genius*, compose the several Parts of that great Work. I shall now treat of an Affair of more general Importance, and make *Dress* the Subject of the following Paper.

Dress is grown of universal Use in the Conduct of Life. Civilities and Respect are only paid to Appearance. 'Tis a Varnish that gives a Lustre to every Action, a *Passe-par-tout* that introduces us into all polite Assemblies, and the only certain Method of making most of the Youth of our Nation conspicuous.

There was formerly an absurd Notion among the Men of Letters, that to establish themselves in the Character of Wits, it was absolutely necessary to shew a Contempt of Dress. This injudicious Affectation of theirs flatten'd all their Conversation, took off the Force of every Expression, and incapacitated a Female Audience from giving Attention to any thing they said. While the Man of Dress catches their Eyes as well as Ears, and at every ludicrous Turn obtains a Laugh of Applause by Way of Compliment.

I shall lay down as an established Maxim, which hath been received in all Ages, that no Person can *Dress* without a Genius.

A Genius is never to be acquired by Art, but is the Gift of Nature; it may be discovered even in Infancy. Little Master will smile when you shake his Plume of Feathers before him, and thrust its little Knuckels into *Papa*'s Full-bottom; Miss will toy with her Mother's *Machlen* Lace, and gaze on the gaudy Colours of a Fan; she smacks her Lips for a Kiss at the Appearance of a Gentleman in Embroidery, and is frighted at the Indecency of the House-Maid's blue Apron: As she grows up, the Dress of her Baby begins to be her Care, and you will see a genteel Fancy open it self in the Ornaments of the little Macine.

We have a kind of *Sketch of Dress*, if I may so call it, among us, which, as the Invention was Foreign, is called a *Dishabille*: every thing is thrown on with a loose and careless Air, yet a Genius discovers it self even through this Negligence of Dress, just as you may see the Masterly Hand of a Painter in three or four swift Strokes of the Pencil.

The most fruitful in *Genius's* is the *French* Nation; we owe most of our janty Fashions, now in Vogue, to some adept Beau among them. Their Ladies exert the whole Scope of their Fancies upon every new Petticoat; every Head-dress undergoes a Change; and not a Lady of Genius will appear in the same Shape two Days together: so that we may impute the Scarcity of Genius's in our Climate to the Stagnation of Fashions.

The Ladies among us have a superior Genius to the Men; which hath for some Years past shot out in several exorbitant Inventions for the greater Consumption of our Manufacture. While the Men have contented themselves with the Retrenchment of the Hat, or the various Scallop of the Pocket; the Ladies have sunk the Head dress, inclosed themselves in the Circumference of the Hoop Petticoat; Furbelows and Flounces have been disposed of at Will; the Stays have been lower'd behind, for the better displaying the Beauties of the Neck; not to mention the various rolling of the Sleeve, and those other nice Circumstances of Dress upon which every Lady employs her Fancy at Pleasure.

The Sciences of *Poetry* and *Dress* have so near an Alliance to each other, that the Rules of the one, with very little Variation, may serve for the other.

As in a Poem all the several Parts of it must have a Harmony with the Whole; so, to keep to the Propriety of Dress, the Coat, Waistcoat and Breeches must be of the same Piece.

As *Aristotle* obliges all Dramatick Writers to a strict Observance of *Time*, *Place* and *Action*, in order to compose a just Work of this kind of Poetry; so it is also absolutely necessary for a Person that applies himself to the Study of Dress, to have a strict Regard to these three Particulars.

To begin with the *Time*. What is more absurd than the Velvet Gown in Summer? and what more agreeable in the Winter? The Muff and Fur are preposterous in *June*, which are charmingly supply'd by the *Turkey* Handkerchief and the Fan. Every thing must be suitable to the Season, and there can be no Propriety in Dress without a strict Regard to *Time*.

You must have no less Respect to *Place*. What gives a Lady a more easie Air than the wrapping Gown in the Morning at the Tea Table? The *Bath* countenances the Men of Dress in throwing themselves at the Pump in their *Indian* Night-Gowns, without the least Indecorum.

Action is what gives the Spirit both to Writing and Dress. Nothing appears graceful without *Action*; the Head, the Arms, the Legs, must all conspire to give a Habit a genteel Air. What distinguishes the Air of the Court from that of the Country but *Action*? A Lady by the careless Toss of her Head will shew a Set of Ribons to advantage; by a Pinch of Snuff judiciously taken will display the glittering Ornament of her little Finger; by the new-modelling her Tucker, at one View present you with a fine turned Hand, and a rising Bosom. In order to be a Proficient in *Action*, I cannot sufficiently recommend the Science of *Dancing*: This will give the Feet an easie Gate, and the Arms a Gracefulness of Motion. If a Person hath not a strict Regard to these three above-mentioned Rules of Antiquity, the richest Dress will appear stiff and affected, and the most gay Habit fantastical and tawdry.

As different Sorts of Poetry require a different Style; the *Elegy* tender and mournful; the *Ode* gay and sprightly; the *Epic* sublime, *&c.* So must the Widow confess her Grief in the Veil; the Bride frequently makes her Joy and Exultation conspicuous in the Silver Brocade; and the Plume and the scarlet Dye is requisite to give the Soldier a Martial Air. There is another kind of Occasional Dress in Use among the Ladies, I mean the riding Habit, which some have not injudiciously stiled the *Hermophroditical*, by Reason of its Masculine and Femine Composition; but I shall rather chuse to call it the *Pindaric*; as its first Institution was at a *New-Market* Horse Race, and as it is a mixture of the Sublimity of the *Epic* with the easie Softness of the *Ode*.

There sometimes arises a great Genius in Dress, who cannot content himself with meerly Copying from others; but will, as he sees occasion, strike out into the long Pocket, slash'd Sleeve, or something particular in the disposition of his Lace, or the flourish of his Embroidery. Such a Person, like the Masters of other Sciences, will shew that he hath a Manner of his own.

On the contrary, there are some Pretenders to Dress who shine out but by halves; whether it be for want of Genius or Mony. A *Dancing Master* of the lowest Rank seldom fails of the Scarlet Stocking and the Red Heel; and shows a particular respect to the *Leg* and *Foot*, to which he owes his Subsistance: When at the same time perhaps all the

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Supeior Ornament of his Body is neglected. We may say of these sort of Dressers what *Horace* says of his Patch-work Poets,

Purpureus late qui splendeat unus & Alter
Assuitur Pannus.——

Others who lay the stress of Beauty in their Face, exert all their Extravagance in the Perriwig, which is a kind of Index of the Mind; the Full bottom formally combed all before, denotes the Lawyer and the Politician; the smart tie Wig with the black Ribbon shows a Man of fierceness of Temper; and he that burthens himself with a superfluity of white Hair which flows down the Back, and mantles in waving Curles over the Shoulders, is generally observed to be less curious in the furniture of the inward Recesses of the Skull, and lays himself open to the Application of that Censure which *Milton* applies to the fair Sex,

——*of outward Forms*
Elaborate, of inward less exact.

A Lady of Genius will give a genteel Air to her whole Dress by a well fancied Suit of Knots, as a judicious Writer gives Spirit to a whole Sentence by a single Expression. As Words grow old, and new ones enrich the Language, so there is a constant Succession of Dress; the Fringe succeeds the Lace, the Stays shorten or extend the Waste the Ribbon undergoes divers Variations, the Head-dress receives frequent Rises and Falls every Year; and in short, the whole Woman throughout, as curious Observers of Dress have remarked, is changed from Top to Toe in the period of five Years. A Poet will now and then, to serve his purpose, Coin a Word, so will a Lady of Genius venture at an Innovation in the Fashion; but as *Horace* advises, that all new minted Words should have a *Greek* derivation to give them an indisputable Authority, so I would counsel all our Improvers of Fashion always to take the Hint from *France*, which may as properly be called *the Fountain of Dress*, as *Greece* was of Literature.

Dress may bear a Parallel to Poetry with respect to moving the Passions. The greatest Motive to *Love*, as daily Experience shows us, is *Dress*. I have known a Lady at sight fly to a Red Feather, and readily give her Hand to a fringed pair of Gloves. At another time, I have seen the awkward Appearance of her Rural humble Servant move her *Indignation*; she is *Jealous* every time her Rival hath a new Suit; and in a *Rage* when her Woman pins her Mantoe to disadvantage. Unhappy, unguarded Woman! alas! what moving Rhetorick has she often found in the seducing Full-bottom? Who can tell the resistless Eloquence of the Embroidered Coat, the Gold Snuff-Box, and the Amberheaded Cane?

I shall conclude these Criticisms with some general Remarks upon the *Milliner*, the *Mantoe-maker*, and the *Lady's Woman*, these being the three chief on which all the Circumstances of Dress depend.

The *Milliner* must be thoroughly versed in Physiognomy; in the Choice of Ribbons she must have a particular regard to the Complexion, and must ever be mindful to cut the Head-dress to the Dimensions of the Face. When she meets with a Countenance of large Diameter, she must draw the Dress forward to the Face, and let the Lace encroach a little upon the Cheek, which casts an agreeable shade, and takes off from its Masculine Figure; the little Oval Face requires the diminutive Commode, just on the tip of the Crown of the Head; she must have a regard to the several Ages of Woman; the Head-dress must give the Mother a more sedate Mien than the Virgin; and Age must not be made ridiculous with the flaunting Airs of Youth. There is a Beauty that is peculiar to the several Stages of Life, and as much Propriety must be observed in the Dress of the Old, as the Young.

The *Mantoe-maker* must be an expert *Anatomist*; and must, if judiciously chosen, have a Name of *French* Termination; she must know how to hide all the defects in the Proportions of the Body, and must be able to Mold the Shape by the Stays, so as to preserve the Intestines, that while she corrects the Body she may not interfere with the Pleasures of the Palate.

The *Lady's Woman* must have all the Qualities of a Critick in Poetry; all her Dress like the Criticks Learning is at *Second-hand*; she must, like him, have a ready Talent at *Censure*, and her Tongue must be deeply versed in Detraction; she must be sure to asperse the Characters of the Ladies of most eminent Virtue and Beauty, to indulge her Lady's Spleen; and as it hath been remarked, that Criticks are the most fawning Sycophants to their Patrons, so must our Female Critick be a thorough Proficient in Flattery: She must add Sprightliness to her Lady's Air by encouraging her Vanity, give Gracefulness to her Step by cherishing her Pride, and make her show a haughty Contempt of her Admirers, by enumerating her imaginary Conquests. As a Critick must stock his Memory with the Names of all the Authors of Note, she must be no less ready in the recital of all the Beaus and pretty Fellows in Vogue; like the Male Critick, she asserts, that the Theory of any Science is above the Practice, and that it is not necessary to be able to set her own Person off to Advantage, in order to be a judge of the Dress of others; and besides all these Qualifications, she must be endow'd with the Gift of Secrecy a Talent very rarely to be met with in her Profession.

By what I have said, I believe my Reader will be convinced, that notwithstanding the many Pretenders, the Perfection of Dress cannot be attained without a Genius; and I shall venture boldly to affirm, that in all Arts and Sciences whatever, *Epick Poetry* excepted, (of which I formerly showed the *Knack* or *Mechanism*,) a Genius is absolutely Necessary.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

This Day is Publish'd, (Printed in a neat Pocket Volume 12mo,)

The Third Edition of the Distrest Mother. A Tragedy. Written by Mr. Phillips. Printed for Jacob Tonson at the Shakespear's Head over-against Catherine-street in the Strand.

Mr. BROOKE (formerly in Partnership with Mr. Hellier) gives Notice, that this Day he opens the Bumper Tavern in James street Covent-Garden, for French Wines at 2 s. 6 d. per Quart within Doors, being of the same Growth that gives now such great Satisfaction from his Vault under the Corner House of Park Place in St James's street. In the said Vault he begins this Day to sell also Canary at 2 s. Sherry 2 s. and Florence at 3 o d. per Quart. This Day he has also opened a Cellar for the Sale of all the several sorts of Wine above mentioned, and also of Old Red Wine at 1 s. 6 d. per Quart. Note, That to prevent a Practice which the said Brooke often detected of Persons sent to his Houses and Cellars for Wine, going to other places for the same, which frequently occasioned Gentlemen's having bad Wine and short Measure imposed on them, Receipts will hereafter be given for the Money Received for any quantity of Wine sent for not less than a Gallon. Note, There is a good Coach at the Bumper Tavern.

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THE Famous WATER THEATRE of the late Ingenious Mr. Winstanly, will be Shown this Evening at 5 of the Clock and no longer this Season. There is the greatest Curiosities in Water Works to be performed this Day, that hath ever been at one time before, viz. several new Figures and Fountains playing of Water added to the Sea Gods and Goddesses, Nymphs, Mermids and Satyrs; the Mathematical Barrel will be turned into a Tavern, entertaining the Pit and Boxes with 6 sorts of Wine, Biscuits, Spaw-water; then into a Coffee-house, with a flying Cupid attending, who will present Coffee and Tea, and News Papers. And when the Head of it is in the Pullies, Pale Ale, Stout and Clarret will be drawn out of several Cocks, with Water playing out of the top at the same time; there will be an Entertainment of Vocal and Instrumental Musick; and as the Musick begins, the Figures supporting that Gallery will move their Heads, Syrens Singing upon Rocks, who will vanish as a great Tempest begins of Thunder and Lightning, and Fire mingling with many Cascades of Water, to the Expence of 800 Tun extraordinary. Boxes 3 s. Pit 2 s. 6 d. First Gallery, 2 s. Upper Gallery 6 d. This is at the lower End of Piccadilly, towards Hide-Park; and on Thursday next several new Curiosities will be added to his Fam'd House at Littlebeary in Essex, on the Road to Sturbridge Fair, Newmarket, Berry, Norwich, Lynn and Yarmouth; both are in the Possession of his Widow, and are shown for her Benefit.

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